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Security Council

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Sixteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1436 (2002) of 24 September 2002, the Security Council urged the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to complete, within eight months, the first and second phases of the Mission's drawdown plan, which was presented in my fifteenth report (S/2002/987). The Council also requested me to report on progress made at the end of each phase and in the planning of subsequent phases. In the same resolution, the Council authorized the deployment of up to 170 civilian police in UNAMSIL and requested me to provide an update on their deployment. The present report provides the requested updates, as well as an assessment of progress made towards achieving the key security benchmarks set out in my fifteenth report and the overall efforts to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone.

II. Implementation of the drawdown plan

2. The first two phases of the UNAMSIL drawdown plan, as approved in Security Council resolution 1436 (2002), envisaged a reduction in the troop strength of the Mission from 17,500 to 13,000 by 31 May 2003. The first phase was completed on 8 November 2002 with the withdrawal of 600 troops from the Bangladeshi and Nigerian contingents, as well as reconnaissance helicopters that were considered no longer essential. In addition to the repatriation of these units, elaborate adjustments in troop deployments on the ground were conducted, in order to prepare the stage for the more substantial troop reductions expected in the second phase. As part of the already completed adjustments, UNAMSIL troops vacated three deployment areas, in Bonthe, Koinadugu and Port Loko districts, and reduced the United Nations military presence in Kambia district. All these areas were assessed as being ready for handover to Sierra Leone's security forces with minimum risk.

3. Implementation of the second phase of the drawdown, which envisages the withdrawal of 3,900 troops from the Mission, is in progress. Their repatriation will be conducted in two stages. In the first stage, one Bangladeshi unit (BANBATT 5) will be repatriated during the month of December 2002, and the Pakistani artillery unit (PAKARTY) will be withdrawn in January 2003. In addition, the entire United Nations peacekeeping force will be reorganized into three instead of the present five sectors. The new sector structure will consist of sector west led by the Nigerian

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contingent, whose headquarters will be in Freetown, as well as a Bangladeshi-led sector centre commanded from Magburaka, and a Pakistani-led sector east with headquarters in Koidu. As a result of this restructuring, the military staff at the headquarters of the two sectors to be dismantled will also be repatriated together with their associated signals units.

4. The second de-induction stage will follow a short period of review and consolidation, and will run from March to May 2003. Three major units from the Nigerian contingent (NIBATT 13), the Guinean battalion (GUINBATT) and the Bangladeshi logistics unit (BANLOG), along with the Ghanaian level 2 hospital, are expected to be repatriated during this stage. Adjustments to the locations of several elements of the force will accompany these reductions, and UNAMSIL troops plan to vacate areas in Kambia, Bombali, Koinadugu, Pujehun and Kenema districts, as well as in the western area.

5. In the meantime, planning for the third phase is already at an advanced stage. A detailed description of the envisaged adjustments under this phase will be presented in my March 2003 report to the Security Council. UNAMSIL intends to implement this phase in four steps beginning with a gradual withdrawal of troops from sector centre and proceeding with withdrawals from sectors east and west, to be conducted only after careful assessment of the prevailing security situation and gauging of the capacity of Sierra Leone's police and armed forces to maintain security on their own in these sensitive areas. It is also envisaged that during all phases of the drawdown process, the United Nations military observers will remain active across the entire country and will play a crucial role in assessing the security environment as well as the performance of Sierra Leone's security forces.

III. Strengthening the security sector

6. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 1436 (2002), the Security Council stipulated that the implementation of the UNAMSIL drawdown plan should be guided by an evaluation of the security situation in the country and a review of the capacity of Sierra Leone's security sector to take responsibility for internal and external security. To this end, UNAMSIL and the Government of Sierra Leone have established joint mechanisms, including an integrated planning group and joint meetings of senior UNAMSIL military officers and the National Security Coordination Group, which convene regularly to take stock of the prevailing security conditions. In addition, the Steering Committee that coordinates the efforts to strengthen the Sierra Leone police is now operational. The Committee comprises the Sierra Leone police and UNAMSIL, as well as the Commonwealth police advisers, and is chaired by the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone police.

7. During the period under review, the integrated planning group, which brings together the relevant UNAMSIL military and civilian officers, as well as representatives of the Sierra Leone army and police, has conducted rigorous monitoring of the conditions on the ground and evaluation of potential risk factors. Information collected by United Nations military observers and civil affairs officers deployed throughout the country, as well as Sierra Leone army and UNAMSIL troops conducting intensive patrols in the border areas, greatly facilitated the evaluation by the integrated planning group. The assessments of the group indicate

that, with the exception of the areas along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border, the internal security situation in Sierra Leone has remained generally stable.

8. The conflict in Liberia remains a major concern for sustained stability in Sierra Leone. During the month of November, there was an upsurge of raids by armed Liberians searching for food in Sierra Leonean villages in the border areas. Though difficult to confirm, reports abound of recruitment of former Sierra Leonean combatants by both the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and Liberian government forces. At the same time, the camp created by the Government of Sierra Leone to accommodate Liberian combatants fleeing from both LURD and government forces is now operational, and currently holds 64 inmates, of whom 56 are former members of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and 8 former members of LURD. The creation of the camp should facilitate the separation of armed elements that infiltrate refugee camps. However, the deteriorating conditions in the refugee camps, as described in paragraph 29 below, could also create additional security challenges.

Sierra Leone police

9. The efforts of the Government, UNAMSIL and the Commonwealth team to strengthen the Sierra Leone police force are now focusing on the recruitment of new cadets, and the training of both the fresh recruits and serving personnel, as well as providing the equipment and infrastructure necessary for the effective functioning of the force. The Government has tentatively indicated its intention to bring the strength of the national police force to its pre-war level of 9,500 personnel. However, a review of the police establishment is currently under way, with a view to determining the optimum strength that would enable it to take effective responsibility for internal security. It is expected that the review will be completed in February 2003. In the meantime, the Government plans to increase the strength of the national police force by 1,000 personnel in 2003. From the ongoing recruitment exercise, 189 new cadets graduated from the Hastings Police Training School in early December and a further 200 were enrolled for training in mid-December.

10. The Steering Committee responsible for coordinating international support for strengthening the capacity of the police force held its first meeting on 18 October 2002. The activities of the Committee during the reporting period focused on implementing paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution 1436 (2002), in particular analysing the detailed training needs of the police force and developing recommendations on the deployment of the 170 civilian police personnel in UNAMSIL. The Committee has finalized the concept of operation of the United Nations civilian police and developed profiles of the required training personnel. In this regard, the Committee has requested the United Nations to give priority to the deployment of a chief training officer and mentors who would coach the Sierra Leone police at the division level. The Committee also requested the United Nations to provide civilian police personnel who would advise the Sierra Leone police in specialized areas such as policing diamond mining, airport security, transnational crime and policy planning.

11. As of 17 December, the Secretariat had interviewed 55 civilian police candidates for deployment to UNAMSIL. Of these, 19 mentors and 4 trainers had been deployed, based on profiles developed by the Steering Committee. A chief

training officer and a policy planning specialist have also been selected and are undergoing pre-deployment formalities in their respective countries. In addition, as it phases out the remaining civilian police advisers that have been serving with UNAMSIL under its previously mandated tasks, the Mission has also identified 14 qualified trainers among them who will be retained to carry out the new training tasks. I urge Member States in a position to do so to make available the required civilian police personnel for UNAMSIL in a timely manner.

12. The provision of the requisite infrastructure and equipment for the Sierra Leone police poses greater challenges than the recruitment and training of the police personnel. UNAMSIL (through Japan's contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have already provided support for the rehabilitation of key infrastructure in Freetown, Koidu, Lunsar, Makeni, Kambia, Blama, Koindu, Mongeri, Kabala and Mattru Jong. However, police stations, posts and barracks need to be constructed or rehabilitated in many more areas. In its National Recovery Strategy, the Government estimates that some $1,930,000 will be needed for this purpose, and the current shortfall for this vital area stands at $775,000 for 2003. With regard to equipment, the critical needs are in the areas of communications and transportation. The Sierra Leone police has indicated that, in order to achieve acceptable standards, its current fleet of 480 vehicles should be nearly doubled, and that $3.5 million is needed to enhance its communications system.

Sierra Leone armed forces

13. The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) continues to receive training and restructuring support from the United Kingdom-led International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT). The restructuring process is expected to result in the reduction of the force from its current strength of approximately 14,000 to about 10,500 troops, with accompanying measures to ensure the proper reinsertion of demobilized soldiers into the civilian community. It should be noted, however, that the armed forces still lack the necessary infrastructure for their effective operation. Within Freetown, the infrastructure in terms of barracks and accommodation is dilapidated and overcrowded; in the countryside, there is considerable shortage of suitable barracks and the standard accommodation consists of rudimentary grass structures. The living conditions are worse in the border areas where a third of the force is now deployed.

14. Nevertheless, RSLAF is now a much-improved force and is effectively patrolling both the border areas and Sierra Leone's waters. While no UNAMSIL support can be extended to the navy, the army continues to rely upon UNAMSIL as a backstop and for some logistic support, particularly in the areas along the Liberian border, where UNAMSIL MI-24 helicopter gunships are also routinely patrolling. For RSLAF to be able to sustain the current high level of border operations in the long term, well-established garrison barracks, including accommodation for families, will be required as a matter of priority. A timetable must be drawn up to meet this important need against the UNAMSIL drawdown plan, which envisages the handover of security to the army and police in sector centre over the next 12 months. Although RSLAF self-confidence is growing, the general public is yet to be fully convinced of the long-term reliability of the armed forces. To redress this

perception, the Government's own moral and material commitment to improving the effectiveness of the armed forces will be absolutely necessary.

15. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL continued to conduct joint patrols with both the Sierra Leone police in Freetown and in the districts, and the national army in the border areas, as a means of bolstering their confidence and assessing their capacity to act independently. In this context, UNAMSIL feels that the capacity of the national police to maintain internal security on their own in areas vacated by UNAMSIL is yet to be tested. It should be noted that the areas vacated during the first phase of the drawdown were considered relatively low-risk areas, which do not require the deployment of large numbers of police personnel. However, the second phase of the drawdown will require considerable redeployment of the existing police personnel to fill the security vacuum that is to be created by the departing United Nations troops, while the third phase will demand an increase in the overall strength of the national police force.

IV. Peace consolidation

16. UNAMSIL has continued to work with the Government and development partners in the efforts to consolidate long-term stability in Sierra Leone. The priority tasks on this front include consolidating State authority throughout the country, completing the reintegration of ex-combatants, and restoring the Government's control over diamond mining, as well as promoting human rights, national reconciliation and justice. The efforts to address the remaining humanitarian challenges and accelerate economic recovery are also crucial to the consolidation of peace and stability.

Consolidating State authority

17. In the last few months, the Government has taken commendable steps towards consolidating State authority throughout the country. Efforts at decentralization and empowerment of local communities have focused on three key areas, namely, the deployment of government officials to the districts, as well as filling the 63 posts of Paramount Chiefs that fell vacant during the war, and restoring elected district councils. Approximately 90 per cent of government officials have returned to their posts in the districts and the Government has set March 2003 as the target date for the return of all remaining officials. The process of filling the vacant posts of Paramount Chiefs commenced on 2 December 2002 and is expected to be concluded in all districts by 20 January 2003. As of 17 December, 17 of these posts had been filled. In the meantime, local government elections are scheduled to take place in early 2003. However, complementary efforts to build the capacity of key local government structures to deliver basic services to the people still need to be undertaken. The immediate needs in training of personnel, rehabilitation of infrastructure and provision of logistics have been identified in the Government's National Recovery Strategy.

18. Some progress, albeit modest, is being made in the efforts to extend the court system throughout the country and reform the judiciary. Magistrates' courts have been refurbished with the assistance of the United Kingdom and UNAMSIL, and are now operational in Makeni, Magburaka, Kabala and Koidu. However, judicial

coverage remains inadequate in most areas owing, in part, to lack of trained personnel and logistic constraints. The extension of the court system will obviously be essential for the effectiveness of the national police as it assumes responsibility for law and order in the areas to be vacated by UNAMSIL.

Reintegration of ex-combatants

19. The efforts to create reintegration opportunities for former combatants have recently made encouraging progress. In addition to the opportunities created under the World Bank-managed Multi-Donor Trust Fund, have been offered parallel projects that are absorbing significant numbers of ex-combatants by Germany the United Kingdom, the United States of America, UNDP and UNAMSIL (through Japan's contribution to the Human Security Fund), as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). To date, some 38,850 ex-combatants have benefited from either completed or currently ongoing reintegration projects, leaving a caseload of approximately 17,900 former combatants. Taking into account the parallel projects referred to above and anticipated contributions to the World Bank-managed Multi-Donor Trust Fund, the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has indicated that it should be possible to provide reintegration opportunities for all the remaining ex-combatants by the end of 2003.

20. Meanwhile, the former combatants that have yet to participate in reintegration projects, particularly those from the Civil Defence Force (CDF), still represent a serious security challenge. CDF officials in the southern province recently disclosed to UNAMSIL that, although the force's combatants had disarmed, they were keeping some 19 of their battalions (approximately 10,200 personnel) and their command structures intact, and that CDF intended to keep these structures intact until the ex-combatants received their reintegration benefits. However, as decided during the Consultative Group meeting held in Paris on 13 and 14 November 2002 the Government has undertaken to disband all CDF structures by January 2003.

21. The existence of large numbers of idle former combatants has also contributed to the proliferation of strident youth groups that have continued to usurp the Government's authority in diamond mining areas where State policing remains inadequate. Recognizing the need to address this issue, the Government has formed a Ministry of Youth, which is actively opening channels of communication with the youth groups with a view to directing their energies towards developmental efforts. Nevertheless, it is clear that only the revival of economic activity and the creation of long-term employment opportunities can address the potential security threats presented by the activities of some of these groups.

Restoration of government control over diamond mining

22. The restoration of effective government control over diamond mining has become even more urgent as UNAMSIL draws down. The competition for control by non-State actors in this vital sector is creating unwelcome pressures at both national and local levels. The existence of strident youth groups and predatory traders in the diamond-producing areas creates an atmosphere of distrust and tension. The State mining authorities are still largely ineffective on the ground, and

the Sierra Leone police have been excluded from enforcing the regulatory measures that currently exist in the country. The National Security Coordination Group is seized of the need to introduce new legislation with the guidance provided by the United Kingdom-sponsored mining advisers. In this context, it is hoped that the United Nations civilian police diamond mining expert requested by the Police Steering Committee will contribute to effective policing of the diamond mining areas. In the meantime, in the course of its regular air patrols, UNAMSIL has facilitated aerial assessment of the extent of illegal diamond mining by Ministry of Mines officials and advisers on reconnaissance missions in Pujehun, Kailahun and Kenema districts.

Promoting human rights, national reconciliation and justice

23. The human rights monitoring and capacity-building activities of UNAMSIL continue to constitute an important part of the efforts to consolidate peace and stability in Sierra Leone. In addition to continuing investigations into past human rights abuses and grave breaches of international humanitarian law, the Mission has encouraged the Government to take the necessary measures to facilitate the participation of victims of amputations in the truth and reconciliation process. The UNAMSIL Human Rights Section continues to monitor prison conditions and the process of reviving the judiciary in the provinces. The Mission, in cooperation with UNDP and the Government, is organizing a training programme for justices of the peace recently assigned in the provinces, which will take place in mid-January 2003. It also continues to provide human rights training for the Sierra Leone police and army personnel.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

24. Despite continuing financial constraints, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is now making encouraging progress in its work. It concluded the sensitization phase of its programme of work in October 2002, and launched the statement-taking phase on 4 December at Bomaru, the area where the conflict had begun in March 1991. Over 50 statement-takers have been deployed throughout the country and there are plans to open regional offices. This phase will be followed by public hearings, which will also take place throughout the country, with private interviews organized for vulnerable groups such as children and women victims of sexual abuse. In the meantime, the Commission has invited government, national and international agencies and individuals to provide submissions, that they may consider relevant to the work of the Commission. A caretaker committee is currently running the day-to-day affairs of the Commission, pending the appointment of a new executive secretariat.

Special Court

25. The Special Court for Sierra Leone is now fully operational, and its Registry is expanding its activities throughout the country. Significant progress has been made towards the completion of the permanent site of the Special Court. The swearing-in of the Judges of the Court took place on 2 December 2002. Also, on the same day,

the judges of the Trial and Appeals Chambers of the Special Court elected their respective presiding judges. Justice Geoffrey Robertson (United Kingdom) was elected presiding judge of the Appeals Chamber and President of the Court, while Judge Bankole Thompson (Sierra Leone) was elected presiding judge of the Trial Chamber.

26. UNAMSIL has been providing logistic, security and technical support to the Court, including the use of UNAMSIL radio and press facilities. As called for under Security Council resolution 1436 (2002), the Special Court and UNAMSIL have signed a Memorandum of Understanding covering areas of general assistance, including security and support for the Court's outreach programme, as well as technical and administrative assistance. In October 2002, UNAMSIL handed over to the Court a preliminary inventory of war-related killings and grave sites that have been investigated by the Mission.

V. Humanitarian, recovery and development challenges

27. There is growing consensus among Sierra Leone's international partners on the need for a progressive shift from large-scale relief assistance to recovery and development efforts. However, Sierra Leone still faces some major humanitarian challenges, in particular the provision of assistance to Liberian refugees, the repatriation and resettlement of Sierra Leonean refugees and meeting the needs of former child combatants and other separated children.

28. Some 5,037 of the 6,845 former child combatants, along with 2,097 other separated children, have been registered for support by child protection agencies and are participating in the community-based reintegration programme. In some areas, the tracing of missing children and their reunification with their families are still going on. Efforts to strengthen the capacity of local child protection institutions are also continuing. A memorandum of understanding has been signed between child protection agencies and the Sierra Leone army and police, which will ensure the inclusion of child protection and child rights issues in their training programmes. Child protection agencies have also initiated discussion with the Special Court on developing child-sensitive procedures for the involvement of children in the Court's proceedings.

29. The efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to facilitate the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees and protect the large numbers of Liberian refugees coming into Sierra Leone have been hampered by the recent global funding shortfall faced by the agency. The repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees from Guinea and Liberia has been suspended on a number of occasions owing to lack of funding. The implementing partners of UNHCR have scaled down and, in some cases, terminated basic services for Liberian refugees, including education, sanitation, shelter and programmes to prevent sexual violence and exploitation. The resultant sub-standard conditions in the refugee camps have forced a number of Liberian refugees to either settle in border areas or return to insecure areas in Liberia. There are currently 23,000 Liberian refugees accommodated in camps in Sierra Leone, while 8,500 are living in urban areas and 12,000 in the border areas. UNHCR has indicated that $28.2 million is needed to cover its operational costs in Sierra Leone in 2003, for both repatriation and

reintegration of Sierra Leonean refugees and protection and assistance for Liberian refugees.

30. The final phase of the national programme to resettle internally displaced persons was completed in early December 2002. Some 11,000 displaced persons were resettled under this phase, mainly in the northern and western areas of the country. UNAMSIL continued to support the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in transporting the displaced persons to the resettlement areas. Approximately 220,000 internally displaced persons have been resettled since the programme began in April 2001. The Government and humanitarian agencies are now focusing on relocating squatters and homeless persons from urban areas to community settlements.

31. The Government's National Recovery Strategy continues to serve as an important short-term strategy that guides the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building and from relief to development, linking as it does the four priority areas of consolidating State authority, rebuilding communities, peace-building and human rights, and revival of the economy. The longer-term strategy, which is expected to result in a blueprint for the reduction of poverty (the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed by September 2003.

32. On 13 and 14 November 2002, the World Bank and UNDP jointly convened a Consultative Group meeting in Paris between the Government of Sierra Leone and its humanitarian and development partners, which reviewed progress achieved in consolidating peace and stability in the country and discussed the way ahead during the transition to sustainable peace and development. The meeting commended the Government for the significant progress it had made in 2002, particularly in maintaining macroeconomic stability and economic growth, as well as substantially increasing school enrolment and immunization rates and devising a multi-sector strategy for combating the menace of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). The meeting was informed that Sierra Leone's growth in gross domestic product (GDP) had risen from 2.8 per cent in 2000 to 5.4 per cent in 2001, and is expected to reach 6-7 per cent over the next two to three years. This growth, though remarkable, is, however, being achieved from a low base. The Government has also made progress in improving public resource management through fighting corruption and is instituting reforms aimed at addressing impediments to private sector development. With regard to delivery of basic social services, encouraging indicators include the rise in primary school enrolment from 42 per cent in 2001 to 59 per cent in 2002 and the increase in infant immunization rates for dominant diseases from 33 per cent in 2000 to 70 per cent in 2002.

33. At the Consultative Group meeting, the Government indicated that its main development priorities include action on corruption, strengthening the judiciary, improving financial management, public sector reform and the introduction of a performance-based public sector pay system, poverty reduction, action on education and health care, action on social exclusion and alienated youth, and combating HIV/AIDS. To accelerate economic growth, priority will also be accorded to private sector development, and restructuring agriculture, as well as to reviving the mining industry, rebuilding infrastructure and restoring human capital through community-based programmes.

34. At the end of the meeting, the Consultative Group agreed on a framework for peace, recovery and development, in which a number of key benchmarks were identified, which will serve as a frame of reference in evaluating the overall progress Sierra Leone is making towards the achievement of sustainable peace and development. These benchmarks also constitute a framework for the fulfilment of mutual responsibilities by the Government and its partners in support of national goals. The framework will be reviewed and progress assessed by the Government and its partners through a bimonthly aid-coordination mechanism, chaired at a high level by the Government. The development partners gave indications of continuing support for Sierra Leone, provided that the Government remains on track with respect to its governance reform and poverty reduction programmes, and is able to improve its disbursement capacity. As a follow-up to the Consultative Group meeting, a donor mission comprising representatives from Norway, Sweden, the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the European Union visited Sierra Leone from 3 to 6 December 2002 to assess the situation on the ground. The main concerns expressed by the mission included the limited capacity of implementing partners, instability in the subregion, the insufficient attention given to psychosocial rehabilitation, geographical disparities in development, and how to mobilize resources during the transition period.

VI. Observations

35. Developments over the past few months have already shown the prudence of pursuing a gradual drawdown of UNAMSIL over a reasonable period of time. In particular, the coordinated efforts by the Government and UNAMSIL to carefully evaluate the risk factors and avoid a security vacuum in areas vacated by UNAMSIL have continued to ensure a stable security environment, thus enabling the Government and development partners to concentrate on national recovery efforts. As recognized during the Consultative Group meeting held in Paris, the Government has already shown its determination to seize this unique opportunity and has taken commendable steps towards laying the foundation for long-term stability and sustained economic recovery. However, the remaining challenges are still considerable and fundamental breakthroughs will take some time to achieve.

36. It is gratifying to note that the efforts of the Government and its development partners are focusing on systematically addressing potential sources of renewed instability and thus contributing to the consolidation of peace. Their efforts to support the completion of the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian communities are particularly commendable. I am also encouraged by both the goodwill shown by the development partners during the Consultative Group meeting in Paris and the emphasis they are placing on an approach that seeks to ensure a well-managed transition from peacekeeping to peace-building and from relief to development in Sierra Leone. I encourage them to contribute, in a timely manner, the resources needed in this crucial period of transition.

37. The indications of continuing support from the international community, together with the presence of UNAMSIL in the country for the next two years, provide a unique opportunity for Sierra Leone to further strengthen peace and security in its territory and address the root causes of the conflict. To this end, I would like to encourage the Government of Sierra Leone to take the necessary steps aimed at accomplishing the clear benchmarks relating to security, poverty reduction,

governance, economic performance and management issues, as set out in the Results Framework for 2003-2004 adopted at the Consultative Group meeting. In addition, the potential threat to stability presented by former combatants and disgruntled youth groups can be addressed, on a long-term basis, only through accelerated economic recovery that creates employment opportunities.

38. The implementation of the UNAMSIL drawdown plan is the most challenging operation undertaken by the Mission since the disarmament process, which was conducted from May 2001 to January 2002. It is a complex task that requires meticulous management of the risks involved in transferring security responsibilities to the Government of Sierra Leone and elaborate coordination, not only between the military, political and logistic components of UNAMSIL, but also with the relevant departments of the Government. Coordination with development partners is also extremely important, as their activities constitute an important component of the peace consolidation efforts on the ground.

39. As the drawdown of United Nations troops progresses and UNAMSIL vacates more areas, the challenges accompanying this process can be expected to increase. Nevertheless, given the nature of the force capabilities and configuration planned for each critical stage, UNAMSIL does not foresee any major security problems that it would not be able to surmount. The completion of the first phase of the drawdown plan and the progress made so far in implementing the second phase constitute an encouraging beginning.

40. However, much still needs to be done to strengthen the presence of the Sierra Leone police in the areas to be vacated by UNAMSIL in the second and third phases of the drawdown of UNAMSIL. While the arrangements for the training of new and serving police personnel are gathering momentum, these efforts need to be carefully synchronized with the pace of the UNAMSIL drawdown. Of particular importance are the efforts to mobilize the requisite equipment and logistic support for the expansion of the police which are lagging behind. The Government and its partners should expeditiously address the logistic and infrastructure needs of both the police and the army.

41. Even as UNAMSIL draws down, the peacekeeping force will, in addition to pursuing its primary responsibility of maintaining a secure environment, use its capacity to contribute to Sierra Leone's recovery efforts. In this context, the force continues to implement a programme of road improvement designed to further improve accessibility throughout the country. In a commendable effort, some contingents have continued to assist in the rebuilding of schools as well as in supplying potable water and implementing other projects that improve living conditions of the communities in their deployment areas, using the national resources of the respective troop contributors. As indicated earlier, UNAMSIL has also assisted UNHCR and other aid agencies in moving significant numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons around the country.

42. The efforts to address the conflict in Liberia and the threat it continues to pose to stability in Sierra Leone may be gaining momentum owing to the work of the International Contact Group on Liberia, which held its first meeting in Dakar on 19 December 2002 following its launching in September. The dialogue among the Mano River Union countries also needs to be re-energized. The emergence of a new conflict in Côte d'Ivoire with reported involvement of former armed elements from both Liberia and Sierra Leone has extended the area and complicated the nature of

the conflict in Sierra Leone's neighbourhood. This worrisome development gives added urgency to the need for a comprehensive regional approach. In this regard, I am greatly encouraged by the Security Council's proposal to develop a comprehensive strategy among the international community to address the situation in Liberia and to send an assessment mission to the region in early 2003, as indicated in its presidential statement of 13 December 2002 (S/PRST/2002/36).

43. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries, as well as to the Economic Community of West African States and donor countries, for their continued support for UNAMSIL. I also wish to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, and all UNAMSIL military and civilian personnel, and humanitarian and development agencies, as well as the donor community, for their tireless efforts to bring lasting peace and stability to the country.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 20 December 2002

Authorized military strength: 16,900 (up to 260 military observers)

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Sector headquarters staff*	*Total*
Bangladesh	12	18	2 976	65	3 071
Bolivia	6				6
Canada	5				5
China	6				6
Croatia	10				10
Czech Republic	5				5
Denmark	2				2
Egypt	10				10
Gambia	15				15
Germany			12		12
Ghana	7	12	850	59	928
Guinea	11	5	773		789
Indonesia	10				10
Jordan	10	2	120		132
Kenya	11	14	995	65	1 085
Kyrgyzstan	2				2
Malaysia	10				10
Mali	8				8
Nepal	10	4	797		811
New Zealand	2				2
Nigeria	9	16	3 077	57	3 159
Pakistan	15	18	4 204	50	4 287
Russian Federation	15	4	110		129
Slovakia	2				2
Sweden	3				3
Thailand	5	5			10
Ukraine	5	5	639		649
United Kingdom	15	7			22
United Republic of Tanzania	12				12
Uruguay	11				11
Zambia	10	6	818	5	839
Total	**254**	**116**	**15 371**	**301**	**16 042**

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to table)

Force Commander: Kenya; Deputy Force Commander/Chief Military Observer: Pakistan

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 3; Cameroon: 1; Canada: 2; Gambia: 2; Ghana: 4; Jordan: 2; Kenya: 5; Malaysia: 4; Nepal: 5; Niger: 2; Norway: 3; Senegal: 2; Sri Lanka: 1; United Republic of Tanzania: 1; Zambia: 1; Zimbabwe: 2; **Total: 40**.

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